

COINS

A package of tips on gifts for collectors

By Roger Boye

If you have coin collectors on your holiday shopping list, don't fret. Here are several suggestions to help ensure gift-giving success.

- A gift certificate from a neighborhood coin store. Most established collectors would rather receive a gift certificate—and thus be able to select their own rare-date coins—than receive coins as a gift.

If you buy coins, you run the risk of getting something the collector has already, or something he or she doesn't want. And it's difficult for a noncollector to determine a good coin buy. If you "get taken," both of you will feel bad.

- Subscription to a coin newspaper or magazine. The most popular are two weekly newspapers—Coin World [\$18 a year; write P.O. Box 150, Sidney, Ohio 45367] and Numismatic News [\$15 a year; write 700 E. State St., Iola, Wis. 54990].

But a word of warning: Some persons prefer to have coin periodicals mailed to an office address or post

office box, or purchase them on the newsstand. They worry that by receiving the papers at home, they are publicizing the fact that they collect, even if just the mailman knows.

- A "birthday year" set of coins. This gift would be appropriate for novices, especially youngsters just getting started in the hobby.

As the term implies, the set would include a coin of ~~each~~ denomination made during the year the person was born. The price would vary with the condition of the coins and the year [a set of uncirculated coins dated 1967, for example, would cost about \$6].

- Numismatic accessories. Such paraphernalia as coin folders, coin tubes, and magnifying glasses are essential to the coin hobbyist. So are books. Check coin stores for these.

- A bullion gold coin. Even a noncollector might be thrilled by a gift of gold that doesn't have to cost a small fortune. "Bullion coins" are saved strictly for their gold content, not for any collector value.

The most widely advertised is the South African krugerrand, an expensive nugget [slightly more than \$400] because of its 1-ounce size.

But there are many smaller and less expensive bullion gold coins, including the Mexican 2 peso [about \$24] or the Austrian 1 ducat [about \$50]. Some coin shops stock a mini-krugerrand containing a tenth of an ounce of gold for about \$50.